(iv) Modernisation of Sanskrit Pathshalas.

The scheme also provides for 100% financial assistance to States/UTs for their own programmes for the development of Sanskrit language, such as Vidwat Sammelan, Elocution contests in Sanskrit pathshalas, holding of evening classes for teaching Sanskrit, celebrating Kalidas Samaroh etc. Information from States/UTs of programmes other than these is not available in the Ministry.

[English]

National Road Safety Committee

1369. SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Road Safety Committee has recommended to set up a minimum of 3000 K.M. length of National Highways in Karnataka by 2000 A.D.; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) There is no National Road Safety Committee However, there is a National Road Safety Council constituted under the Chairmanship of Minister of Surface Transport. Four meetings of the Council have so far been held and no such recommendation have been made in any of the meetings.

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Repair of N.H. 28 in Bihar

1370. SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the National Highway-28 has damaged from Begusarai to Tajpur in Samastipur district due to which transport system has been disrupted.

(b) whether a bridge constructed on this highway over Sultana Nallah near Bachhwada has also been damaged; and

(c) if so, the time by which the Government propose to get the highway repaired and to construct new bridge over Sultana Nallah?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) There has been minor damages in this reach.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Maintenance of National Highways is a continuous process. National Highway is being maintained in traffic worthy condition within available resources. The work of construction of new bridge at Sultana Nallah is already in progress.

[English]

Rajiv Gandhi Health University

1371. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Karnataka Government has sought Central assistance or assistance from UGC for the Rajiv Gandhi Health University at Bangalore;

(b) if so, the quantum of funds sought;

(c) whether the Government have sanctioned any assistance to the above University during 1996-97; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Rs. 10.00 crores.

(c) and (d). Health being a State subject, the matter has been taken up with the Planning Commission for providing the necessary funds.

People of Indian Origin in Afghanistan

1372. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether families of persons of Indian origin settled in Afghanistan have been targetted by the Taliban militia as reported in the 'Hindustan Times' dated October 19, 1996;

(b) the number of persons of Indian origin whose houses have been ransacked, property looted and asked to leave the country, the number of them returned to India so far;

(c) the steps being taken to help these persons for the safety of their lives and property in Afghanistan; and

(d) the present number of persons of Indian origin who were migrated from Afghanistan to India on account of disturbed conditions and the assistance and facilities that have so far been rendered to them?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) to (d) Government have seen the Press report in the Hindustan Times of October 19, 1996, but have received no corroborative reports on the subject from other sources.

Calcutta Port Development Programme

1373. SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether privatisation of Calcutta Port Development programme is being considered at the highest level; and